

KCA NEWSLETTER



Message from the Chair of the KCA

Dear Fellow Alumnae,

We've had a wonderful and energetic start to 2025, and as always, we are so grateful to our alumnae for their ideas, involvement, donations and fellowship. One of our goals this year is to deepen alumnae engagement within the school community—to remind current students that being part of Kingsmead College is a lifelong connection.

We held our first Kingsmead College Alumnae (KCA) Committee meeting in February and are delighted to welcome several new members. We're always looking for passionate alumnae to join us in planning events and initiatives—your time, support and participation are valued.



Recent Highlights

Women in Science Event – 11 February 2025

We were proud to host a Women in Science event for our Junior School students, where alumnae working in the sciences shared their career journeys. Students in Grades 5, 6 and 7 thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to ask insightful questions.

We were privileged to welcome five inspiring alumnae speakers:

- A medical doctor specialising in aesthetics
- A medical doctor currently completing a Master's in Epidemiology
- An electrical engineer
- A dentist
- A patent attorney who is also an agricultural scientist

We are incredibly grateful to these alumnae for generously donating their time to educate and inspire the next generation.

The Messenger – 13 February 2025

Our first fundraiser of the year, The Messenger, was a talk hosted by Michael Charton in the beautiful new Mkwazi Theatre. The event was enlightening and thought-provoking, with Michael sharing powerful insights and stories. A special moment came when he featured a photograph of Margaret Marshall—a proud Kingsmead alumna—who played a central role in his talk. If you haven't seen the new theatre yet, it's well worth a visit!

Alumnae Meet-Ups in Cape Town & Stellenbosch – 5 & 6 March 2025

Lisa Palmer hosted Kingsmead College Alumnae Meet-Ups in Cape Town and Stellenbosch on 5 and 6 March. These events were warm, engaging, and well-attended. We look forward to arranging similar gatherings in other cities throughout the year.

Memory Hour – 29 March 2025

Our most recent Memory Hour brought alumnae together on campus to share personal stories and reflections of their time at Kingsmead. These memories are being collected for our Centenary celebrations in 2033. Our next Memory Hour will take place on Saturday, 12 July 2025, and we would love for you to join us and contribute to this meaningful archive.

Upcoming Events

Career Evening – 7 May 2025

Our annual Career Evening will be on Wednesday, 7 May 2025. Alumnae from all fields are invited to share their professional journeys with current students. These evenings are always inspiring, and we would love to welcome more speakers and attendees. You are most welcome to attend, whether you'd like to present or simply come and listen.

Bridge Drive & High Tea – 12 July 2025

Join us for our much-loved Bridge Drive and High Tea on Saturday, 12 July 2025. Expect delicious food, great prizes and warm company. All proceeds will go toward the KCA Bursary Fund, and we are always grateful for prize donations or sponsorships in support of this meaningful cause.

Stay Connected

We would love to hear from every one of you! Please share your news and updates so we can feature them in upcoming KCA newsletters. We're also launching a monthly Alumna Spotlight on our social media platforms. If you'd like to be featured—or know someone who should be— please get in touch.

Warm regards,

Caro Berry

Message from the Executive Head

Dear Kingsmead Alumnae,

As we settle into the rhythm of 2025, I hope this message finds you well and thriving in your various walks of life. A new year always brings fresh beginnings, renewed goals and the opportunity to reflect on the journey so far. Wherever this year takes you, please know that you continue to be a cherished part of the Kingsmead story.

It was an absolute pleasure to reconnect with many of our past students at our recent (and first) alumnae gatherings in Cape Town and Stellenbosch on 5 and 6 March this year. Both events were filled with vibrant conversation, shared memories and a strong sense of community that reminded us of the deep bonds formed during the school journey. Thank you to everyone who joined us, both older and younger alumnae. I so enjoyed hearing about your life adventures, professional paths and the many ways you continue to live out the values instilled during your time at Kingsmead.

While in Cape Town, I had the privilege of having tea with a special Kingsmead alumnus – Irene Menell – in her beautiful home. Irene matriculated from Kingsmead in 1949, she recounted her memories of DV Thompson and Vera Paver – with whom she became very friendly. Irene only spent two years at Kingsmead, as she had previously been at school in Switzerland. She later became the founding Chairperson of READ in 1979 and played a significant role in the community, the country and its politics. Irene's daughters (Susan, Mary and Katie) all attended Kingsmead, and ironically her husband, Clive – was one of the boys who attended Kingsmead in the early days.



Irene Menell

Another highlight this term was listening to the alumnae who returned to the Junior School to speak about their careers in the various sciences as we celebrated "Women in Science Day." What a proud moment this was, seeing the meaningful contribution so many of our past students are making around the country.

We'd love to keep the connection going. Whether you're nearby or across the globe, your ongoing involvement means so much to us. From mentoring current students to joining future reunions or simply keeping us updated on your news, there are many ways to stay involved in the life of the school. Please don't hesitate to reach out—we'd love to hear from you and bring you onto the campus to see the museum and archives and the many wonderful changes that we have made.

Wishing you a year filled with purpose, happiness and meaningful connection.

Fond regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Palmer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Palmer
Executive Head: Kingsmead

Celebrating Women in Science at Kingsmead College

11 February 2025

On Tuesday, 11 February, Kingsmead College proudly celebrated the International Day of Women and Girls in Science—a global initiative that promotes gender equality in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The day is a powerful reminder to ensure equal access and opportunities for women and girls in scientific fields, where they remain significantly underrepresented.

To mark this important occasion, we were thrilled to welcome five inspiring Kingsmead alumnae working in various scientific disciplines. These remarkable women volunteered their time to speak with our Junior School students in Grades 5–7, sharing insights into their career paths, their work and the challenges they've overcome.

Their stories educated and inspired the students, providing encouragement, motivation and a strong message that science is a space where girls belong and can thrive. The morning was filled with curious and thoughtful questions from our students, who were eager to learn more about the real-world impact of science and the many exciting paths it offers.

This initiative was not only a celebration of science but also a celebration of community. By involving our alumnae, we reinforced the powerful connection between past and present Kingsmead students—and the idea that success in science is possible and within reach.

We are deeply grateful to the alumnae who generously gave their time and shared their experiences. Their presence made the day a meaningful and memorable one, as their example serves as an inspiration for the next generation of young women in science.

Lara Bugarin née Sholamey (class of 2001)
Advancement Officer



The Messenger – A Talk by Michael Charton

13 February 2025

On 13 February, the Kingsmead College Alumnae (KCA) hosted its first fundraising event of 2025—a thought-provoking talk titled *The Messenger* by renowned storyteller Michael Charton. The event was in the newly completed Kingsmead College Mkwana Theatre, a fitting venue for an evening of reflection, learning and inspiration.

Presented as part of Charton's *Inherit South Africa* collection, *The Messenger* explored Bobby Kennedy's 1966 tour of South Africa, drawing compelling parallels between the social and political climates of the United States and South Africa during the 1960s. The talk captivated the audience with its engaging narrative and historical insight, offering powerful reflections on justice, leadership and human rights.

A particularly special moment for the Kingsmead community was the mention of our very own alumna, Margaret Marshall, who matriculated from Kingsmead in 1961. Margaret was deeply involved in anti-apartheid activism during her youth and served as President of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) in 1967, courageously advocating for equality during intense political oppression.

Her activism led her to emigrate to the United States in 1968, where she pursued higher education and ultimately forged a distinguished legal career. Margaret Marshall later became Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, leaving a lasting legacy through her transformative leadership, dedication to civil rights and commitment to the rule of law.

Audience members praised the evening for its depth, relevance, and emotional impact. The performance served as a historical reflection and a call to action, reminding us of our responsibility to uphold justice and equality in our own time.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Michael Charton for generously volunteering his time and expertise to support this important cause. His contribution helped raise funds for the KCA Bursary Fund, which provides financial assistance to deserving students. We are truly grateful for his support and for helping us begin the year with such a meaningful and memorable event.

Lara Bugarin née Sholamey (class of 2001)
Advancement Officer







Cape Town & Stellenbosch Alumnae Meet-Ups – Celebrating Connection and Community

5 & 6 March 2025

On 5 and 6 March, Lisa Palmer travelled to Cape Town and Stellenbosch to reconnect with Kingsmead alumnae currently living or studying in the region. Both evenings were filled with laughter, shared memories and the unmistakable Kingsmead spirit.

The meet-ups brought together former students from various year groups in a relaxed and welcoming setting. For Lisa, it was a heartwarming opportunity to catch up with the alumnae she knew during her time at Kingsmead and to meet those who had been part of the school community before her tenure. The events offered a meaningful space for new connections and nostalgic conversations alike.

The atmosphere at both gatherings was one of genuine warmth and camaraderie. Stories from school days were shared over light refreshments, and conversations flowed effortlessly. Many alumnae commented on how special it was to reconnect with familiar faces and reflected on how Kingsmead has grown while continuing to uphold the values that shaped their time at the school.

These events are a beautiful reminder that being part of the Kingsmead College Alumnae community is a lifelong journey. Whether rekindling old friendships or forging new ones, our meet-ups are a celebration of shared heritage, enduring bonds and the extraordinary women who make up our alumnae network.

A heartfelt thank-you to all who attended and contributed to the success of the gatherings. We look forward to hosting more Alumnae Meet-Ups in cities across the country and beyond – strengthening our connections and celebrating the Kingsmead legacy wherever we are.

Lara Bugarin née Sholamey (class of 2001)
Advancement Officer









ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT

Topaz Page-Green

We are proud to shine this month's Alumna Spotlight on the remarkable Topaz Page-Green, a Kingsmead College alumna who matriculated in 1994. Topaz is best known as the founder and visionary behind The Lunchbox Fund, a nonprofit organization dedicated to combating child hunger in South Africa.

Founded in 2005, The Lunchbox Fund provides daily, nutritious meals to orphaned and vulnerable schoolchildren in South Africa's townships and rural areas. By ensuring that children receive at least one balanced meal per day, the organization directly supports improved concentration, academic performance, and school attendance. Their programs are designed not only to be nutritionally sound but also culturally appropriate, meeting children where they are with food that is both healthy and familiar.

The impact of this work is profound. In 2024 alone, The Lunchbox Fund served over 106,000 children across 1,975 schools, delivering more than 21 million meals. Impressively, the average cost to provide a nutritious meal to a child is just R4.15 (US\$0.23 or £0.17)—a powerful testament to the scalability and efficiency of their model.

The organization also places emphasis on early childhood development, recognizing the lifelong benefits of proper nutrition during the formative years. Today, The Lunchbox Fund operates across all nine provinces of South Africa.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Topaz on the extraordinary impact she is making through her unwavering dedication to alleviating childhood hunger. Her compassion, leadership, and commitment to service are truly inspiring. She continues to embody the values that Kingsmead College holds dear—empathy, excellence, and the courage to lead meaningful change.

Topaz's philanthropic journey is a powerful reminder that one person's vision, backed by action, can create transformative and lasting change. We are deeply proud to call her one of our own and look forward to witnessing the continued growth and reach of her remarkable efforts.



Topaz Page-Green and Gillian Wilkinson

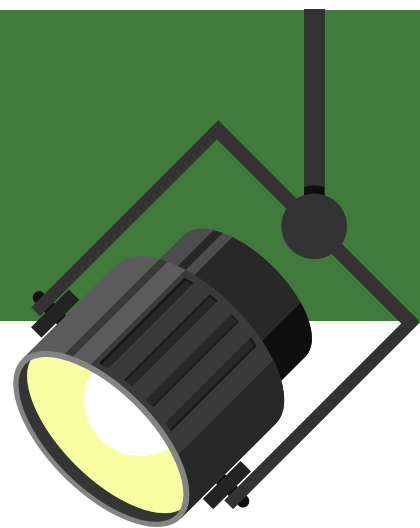
To learn more about The Lunchbox Fund, please visit their website: www.thelunchboxfund.org. You can also follow their inspiring work on social media. If you feel moved to contribute, donations—no matter the size—are always welcome and greatly appreciated.

We were fortunate to catch up with Topaz during her recent visit to South Africa in early April. It was a true honour to meet her in person and hear more about her journey. Thank you, Topaz, for taking the time to connect with us and share your insights.

Lara Bugarin née Sholamey (class of 2001)
Advancement Officer

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Topaz Page-Green



What year did you matriculate from Kingsmead College?

2004

How many years did you attend Kingsmead College?

I was one of the girls who attended Kingsmead from Grade 0 to Matric, and I vividly remember my very first day. I arrived with my mom and dad, walking down the lawn by the Junior School, and I sobbed hysterically. At the time, the expectation was to say goodbye and go — no gradual introductions like there are now. I couldn't have been more than five, and it was my first experience of real separation in a completely new environment.

I remember sitting on my dad's knee, crying, before they gently sent me off to the Grade 0 classroom. There was an outdoor area, a sandpit, and a flight of stairs leading to the classroom — though everything's changed since then. I can still picture those little faces sitting in a circle. That first day and my last day are so clear in my mind. The rest is a bit hazy, but those moments have stayed with me.

Do you remain connected with any of the friends you had during your school years?

Yes, absolutely. One of the things I've always valued about Kingsmead is the incredible camaraderie. Even if you didn't speak to someone every day, there was a natural connection — not just with your classmates, but with girls from other grades too. I'm not sure if it was the Kingsmead environment, the era we grew up in, or simply the warmth of South African people, but it's something special you don't often find elsewhere.

My husband jokes about my Kingsmead stories and says it must be my 'Kingsmead manners,' which makes me laugh. And yes, I still have wonderful friendships from school even with those I wasn't particularly close to at school, there's an ease when we reconnect. I recently bumped into Justine Edmonson — now with a married name — completely by chance in a small town near Hermanus. We hadn't seen each other since matric, yet it felt so natural to catch up, meet her kids, and reminisce.

To be honest, when I finished school, I was ready to leave it behind. It wasn't always easy for me. But Gillian Wilkinson brought me back into the fold and helped me find my path and purpose. She's truly an angel, and I'll always be grateful for that. I hope the sense of connection and community we had still lives on for the girls there today.

Can you share any teachers or mentors at Kingsmead who had a significant impact on your life and career?

Gillian Wilkinson. A thousand times over — Gillian. I've said it before, she's an angel, an illuminated being. Anyone who has her as a teacher is truly blessed, even if they don't realize it at the time. We used to be terrified of her at school. She was so strict, and it felt like she was mean — but in reality, she was holding boundaries with integrity and care.

Looking back, no one has influenced my life more profoundly than she has. I'm deeply grateful that grace — whatever form it takes — allowed our paths to cross. Without her, what a loss it would have been. She's a guiding light, a star, one in a million.

Gillian helped me reconnect with my own sense of purpose, and to live a purposeful life is the greatest gift. To struggle without it is a burden, and to have someone help you find it is a blessing beyond words. And that's exactly what she is — a blessing.

What inspired you to start the charity and how did your first idea about it come about?

I've always loved children and the idea of helping them, though as a child myself, it was a vague, undefined notion. Gillian, being such an expansive and generous person, would take me along on her outreach visits, wherever help was needed — whether it was providing chalk for classrooms, uniforms, or shoes for children.

It was during one of these trips that I visited a school where the visible hunger among the children struck me deeply. Although at Kingsmead we'd had community outreach days or visits from underprivileged schools, it never truly registered. As a child, I didn't grasp what 'underprivileged' meant. I wasn't from a particularly wealthy background, but I had no concept of real deprivation.

Being physically present in those communities, rather than observing from a distance, changed everything for me. It was profoundly real, eye-opening, and humbling. I must have been around 20 or 21, and it shattered the insulated world I'd known.



Gillian helped me reconnect with my empathy and encouraged me to act. She advised me to start small — not to take on the entire school, but to commit to feeding 100 children. So we did, and that's where it began, in 2002. It was the start of something that would shape my life's direction.

What kind of support were you able to provide?

We started by providing lunch for 100 of the most vulnerable children at the school — a peanut butter sandwich and a piece of fruit — sourced from local bakers and food suppliers within the community. From there, it grew steadily.

Today, we feed 125,000 children every day, and we've extended our program to reach 6,000 children in Mozambique. It's been an incredible journey, and I truly love what I do. Feeding children is my passion and purpose — it's all I want to do, and I feel so grateful to live a life dedicated to it.

It's incredible what you've achieved — how do you find the funding to make it all possible?

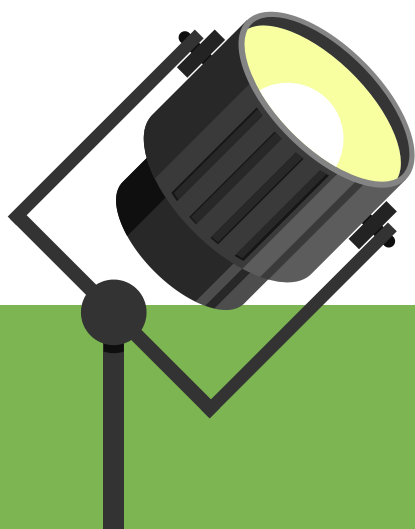
Well, that's the tricky part. Sometimes funding finds you, and other times you have to knock down doors. It's a mix of both. Thankfully, our reputation has grown significantly — we're well-regarded because we do what we do exceptionally well.

Every cent we raise is used meticulously, with nothing wasted. We're a lean, driven team of women who deliver on what we promise. It's the strength of being South African women — tough, no-nonsense, and efficient. And honestly, I love it.

You are currently living in the USA. Do you have a team running it in South Africa?

We have a team in South Africa and a system in place that ensures everything gets done, and of course, I have a team in the States focused on fundraising. A significant portion of our funds comes from the U.S., but we also receive substantial support from South Africa.

Fundraising is never the most enjoyable task, but it can sometimes be fun when you succeed. When you secure a new major donor, it feels incredibly satisfying.



Looking ahead, what are your goals and hopes for the charity?

My goal is to expand our Mozambique program and continue growing our South African initiative. We focus on one thing — feeding children in educational settings. I want to feed more kids in early childhood development centers, preschools, primary and secondary schools, and after-school programs, especially where there are gaps in government support.

What advice would you give others who are passionate about making a difference, especially those who want to give back to their communities?

My advice would be to avoid getting caught up in the rat race, no matter who you are or whether you're interested in giving back to your community. Whatever drives you, stay connected to your own empathy. You can build an empire — commercial or industrial — but always find a way to stay grounded in empathy, or life can feel hollow.

For those whose purpose is helping others, start small. Rome wasn't built in a day. I began by feeding 100 kids — not 100,000. Start with one step and let it grow. It's not easy, but nothing worth doing ever is. Just keep your empathy at the center of it all, and life becomes more fulfilling. If you lose that connection, it can feel like a drag.



MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

St Brigid's Chapel

A gentle breeze filters through the trees, rustling the quiet of the garden surrounding the building of St Brigid's Chapel. It is a haven for all those who enter. The Chapel is still and remarkably peaceful.

The Chapel was built in 1939 in what was then Mornington Garden. Miss DV Thompson, the founder of Kingsmead College, intended for the Chapel to be ecumenical. Whatever the priest is, that is the format of the service on any particular occasion. The name "St Brigid" was chosen in honour of the Irish saint, who set an example of supreme service—one of the Kingsmead values still upheld to this day.

Worship took place in the Chapel from 1939 to 1999. Then, when the Boarding House closed, the weekly services ceased. The Chapel Committee remained, and together with the SCA, serves as a home for the girls who express their Christian faith. Their activities, along with the beginning-of-term Staff Eucharist and assemblies, contribute to the Christian essence of Kingsmead College.

At the time the boarding ceased, Rosebank Union Church moved to Sandton. People who did not wish to travel so far approached Kingsmead to hold services at 09h30 on Sunday mornings. Thus, the Kingsmead Fellowship came into being.

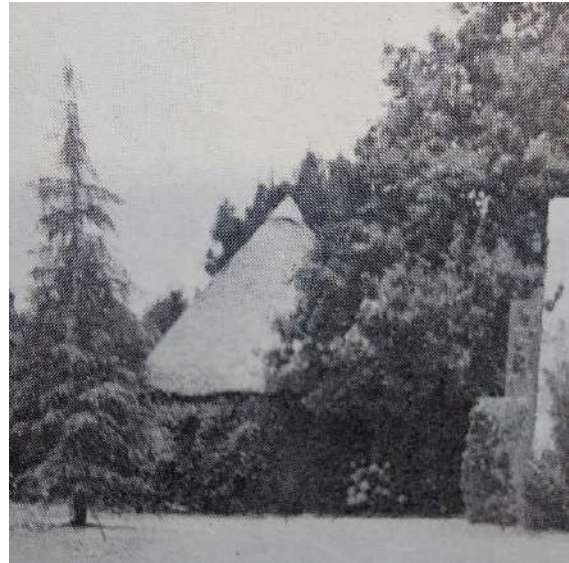
Currently, Ms Palmer addresses the Senior School grades every week, Miss Wilkinson addresses Grades 4-7 once a week and a Staff Eucharist is held each term just before the girls return to school.

Everyone is welcome to sit in the Chapel and experience its quiet during the day. Additionally, everyone is welcome to attend the formal Kingsmead Fellowship church service held on Sunday mornings at 09h30.

Miss Gillian Wilkinson
Kingsmead College Guardian



St Brigid's Chapel



MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

William Mitcheson Timlin and his connection to Kingsmead

What is the story behind a 48-page fantasy book, with 48 pages of illustrations, written over two years by the well-known architect William Mitcheson Timlin?

This precious, heavy, blue linen-covered book nestles on a shelf in the Kingsmead Archives and Museum. Behind the shelf, on the wall hangs a painting by the same man.

Describing *The Ship that Sailed to Mars*, Alan Horne in the Dictionary of 20th Century British Book Illustrators calls it a masterpiece and "the most original and beautiful of children's books" of the 1920s. It is a classic.

The story revolves around an old man whose fairy companions build a fantastical sailing ship to journey to Mars. Along the way, they encounter strange worlds, dangerous obstacles and mythical creatures.



William Mitcheson Timlin, named after his maternal grandfather, was the son of Peter Timlin and Margaret Mitcheson. He was born on 11 April 1892 in Northumberland, England, and died on 7 June 1943 in Kimberley. In England, his talent earned him a scholarship to the Armstrong College of Art in Newcastle. In 1907 his father went to South Africa and a few years later, the family, William then 10 years old, his mother Margaret and his younger siblings Clifford (1903-1976) and Irene (1911-1977) followed. In Kimberley, William completed his training in art and architecture.

William married Marjorie Alice Salonika (lately Skelton) in an Anglican Church on 5 April 1928 in Kimberley. Marjorie's divorce from James Skelton was granted by the Master of the Supreme Court on 7 March 1923. William and Marjorie's antenuptial agreement makes for interesting reading, particularly his gift to her, a Cadillac motor vehicle valued then at £1000.

Their eldest son, born on 15 July 1929, was baptised William Mitcheson Timlin in the Anglican Church on 15 August 1929. William and Marjorie lived in a house at 50 Memorial Road, Kimberley.

He designed several buildings in the town, but Kimberley Boys' High School stands out as one of the most beautiful. The multi-talented William exhibited many watercolour fantasies, pastels, oils and illustrations and wrote and composed music in his spare time. He drew many illustrations for local authors like the pen-and-ink drawings he made for Hedley Chilvers for use in his book *Out of the Crucible* published in 1929 and dedicated to Rand pioneers. Hedley was very grateful to William for his artistic collaboration.

William sent *The Ship that Sailed to Mars* to George Harrap publishers who printed it without any typesetting. Copies are hard to come by.



Kingsmead's Timlin house, like Baker or Kruger, needed little explanation in the early years, but as we move into a time frame nigh on a century later, explanations are sought, invited really!

From Doris V Thompson's, *The First 25 Years*, we learn that in 1934, much conversation focussed on a suitable school badge and motto. A foundation pupil named Molly Brooke sketched three yellow kingcups on a green background with the motto *Franc ha Leal* underneath. Of course, there was more to the drawing and the suggested motto but Misses Thompson and Rawson were sufficiently taken with the idea and heartily encouraged fellow foundation pupil Betty Cross, who knew William Timlin well, to write asking for a finished drawing on which the school badge and motto would be modelled.

To date, a precious sepia-coloured photograph of the original sketch forms an unusual preface in The Ship That Sailed to Mars whilst the original hangs at Kingsmead House.

Nat da Silva
Archives & Museum

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UPCOMING EVENTS



Kingsmead College Career Event 7 May 2025



KCA Bridge Drive & High Tea 12 July 2025



We warmly invite you to join us for a delightful afternoon of friendly competition, delicious refreshments, and wonderful company—all in support of a meaningful cause. Proceeds from the event will go towards the KCA Bursary Fund, helping us provide financial support to deserving students.

We would be truly grateful for any volunteers who would like to get involved in making the day a success. Alternatively, why not gather a group of friends and join us for a memorable afternoon?

We are also appealing for prize donations, sponsorships, or contributions of any kind. If you or someone you know is able to assist, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference and brings us closer to our goal.

We look forward to sharing this special day with you and celebrating the strength of our alumnae community.

Kindly click the link below to reserve your tables.

<https://forms.office.com/r/TXnWw0aW2P>

Legacy Celebration – Gillian Wilkinson

27 June 2025



We are delighted to invite you to a very special **Legacy Celebration** in honour of **Gillian Wilkinson**, who has dedicated an extraordinary 50 years of outstanding service to Kingsmead College.

Gillian's remarkable journey has left an indelible mark on the heart of our school. Her unwavering commitment, compassion, and quiet leadership have touched generations of students, parents, and staff. As a mentor, colleague, and friend, she has exemplified the very essence of Kingsmead's values, shaping not only the institution but also the lives of all who have had the privilege of working alongside her.

Please join us as we come together to celebrate her incredible legacy and express our heartfelt gratitude for all she has contributed to our community.

Event details will follow shortly – we sincerely hope to see you there as we honour this once-in-a-lifetime milestone.



**WE WOULD LOVE TO
CONNECT WITH YOU!**

**Please update your details
and send us your news.**

alumnae@kingsmead.co.za

**If you would like to join our
Kingsmead College Alumnae
Community on WhatsApp please
send us WhatsApp to 079 205
2146 and we will send you the link
to join**

